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Weekly Summary

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February 25, 1977

The WEEKLY SUMMARY, issued every Friday morning by the Current Reporting Group, reports and analyzes significant developments of the week through noon on Thursday. It frequently includes material coordinated with or prepared by the Office of Regional and Political Analysis, the Office of Economic Research, the Office of Strategic Research, the Office of Scientific Intelligence, the Office of Weapons Intelligence, and the Office of Geographic and Cartographic Research.

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1 **Western Hemisphere** NR

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Comments and queries on the contents of this publication are welcome. They may be directed to the editor of the Weekly,

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Western Hemisphere

ARGENTINA 16-17

President Jorge Videla appears to be coming under increasing pressure from fellow military officers critical of his moderate tactics in dealing with labor unrest.

Many of the officers hold labor responsible for a lot of Argentina's problems and favor instituting far more restrictive labor

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policies than those proposed by President Videla and his supporters.

The navy also generally opposes Videla on the issue. [redacted] a missing union leader was detained by navy personnel in order to heighten labor discontent and thus bring more pressure on Videla and those who share his views.

The labor question is one of the most serious political problems facing the military government. Most organized labor activity has been illegal since the junta seized power last March, but workers have repeatedly defied a ban on strikes and slowdowns to protest both their economic plight and the imposition of restrictions.

Videla wants to remove most of the restrictions in an attempt to secure labor's cooperation with the government. His detractors want to emasculate the labor movement as a punitive and preventive measure.

These differences within the military have delayed the issuance of a new basic law defining the status of labor. In recent days, the government has decreed new rules on some procedural aspects of labor activity. US embassy sources believe that an overall law will be announced soon and that it will largely reflect the position of Videla's opponents.

The President's detractors apparently hope to embarrass and weaken him politically by forcing him to take a tougher stand on labor. They also want to undermine the position of his chief confidant, army chief of staff General Viola, who is widely regarded as the architect of the conciliatory line toward labor.

The dissident officers hope to force changes in policy, and perhaps in top personnel, by the first anniversary next month of the coup that ousted Maria Estela Peron. There has been considerable speculation in Argentina that changes in the structure of the country's executive authority will be made around that time.

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President Videla

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